

Jimmy Johnson's Championship Fishing Week 2020 : **Case Study**

**LTE-CONNECT**

LTE-CONNECT Technology Improves  
Long-Distance Communications  
for Fishing Tournament



A case study prepared by Icom America, manufacturers of high-performance, award-winning radios for over 60 years.

# Jimmy Johnson's Championship Fishing Week 2020

## LTE-CONNECT Technology Improves Long-Distance Communications for Fishing Tournament



### LTE-CONNECT

#### Featured Products:

- VE-PG4 RoIP Gateway
  - Portables: IP501H
  - Mobiles: F5061



Jimmy Johnson's 'Quest for the Ring' Championship Fishing Week is an annual event held in Hollywood, FL. And as you can guess, the tournament is led by the newest pro hall of fame inductee, Coach Jimmy Johnson, and highlights include vastly-competitive tournament showdowns and celebrity charity days. Participating teams contend for entrance to win large purses and have the potential to get into the hugely-coveted Ring of Honor, which is an elite group of winners who have previously taken home the top prize.

For one of the championship events, Atlantic Radio Telephone stepped in to address the concerns for the newly-expanded event's communication needs. It had just been decided to extend the area of the tournament to Key Largo, in the Florida Keys. This presented an issue for the current only-VHF radio option. Previously, the event was severely communication-strapped and not very efficient; there was only one VHF radio, and each entrant was expected to validate their catches by taking a photo of the fish and calling it in to officials via their personal cell phones.

### A Hybrid Network is Created

Sam Crowther, vice president of Atlantic Radio Telephone, felt that this was a prime opportunity to create a hybrid network using three of Icom's VE-PG4 RoIP gateways and seamlessly connecting roughly 100 IP501H LTE-CONNECT radios and four F5061 VHF mobile radios. Each VE-PG4 would be located near three equidistant host marinas: Bahia Mar marina in Fort Lauderdale Beach, through the Miami Beach marina, and down to Ocean Reef marina in Key Largo. With this new communication system, every single entrant would be able to have a radio on board.

The VE-PG4, Icom's newest RoIP gateway, allows for almost any modern communications system to connect with Icom's universe of Network products and more. From LTE radios to WLAN, digital, analog, P25, and even SIP phone systems, two or more devices of disparate protocols can all coherently and consistently connect together creating a private, nation-wide communication network. All received audio is then bridged to the opposing radio system, either via the built-in LTE module, or a voice converter.



## Ship-to-Shore Communications

On March 5th and 6th 2020, a legion of anglers climbed into their boats and set out to sea to see who could catch the biggest fish, from Fort Lauderdale Beach to the Florida Keys. With the new communications setup, once someone catches a fish, they use their team's on-board IP501H to contact a tournament official located at the nearest marina's weigh-in station. The official gives the entrant a number to insert into photos for documentation, ensuring no previously-taken images are used in place.

"With participants out on the open water, much of the tournament is taking place beyond regular cell communication range," Crowther said, "this was really the only way to do it." Over the course of the two-day event, the communications between different radios of differing protocols were smooth and uninterrupted.

## The Pros Weigh In

"The support that you guys put in, Edwin Cortes and Greg Dube on the Icom team, in addition to what our techs were able to do, it was a big thing to pull off, but it worked." Crowther added that at the end of the tournament, at the awards ceremony, the tournament director specially thanked Atlantic Radio Telephone for providing wonderful communication and that it performed extremely well and they were so happy, Atlantic Radio Telephone will be doing it again in 2021.

There is certainly a need to combine different radio protocols, but that task can be difficult and at times an expensive endeavor. That time has passed by incorporating Icom's VE-PG4 RoIP gateway – allowing easy connection for crystal-clear comms over a wide area. Whether your event takes place on land or at sea, Icom offers an extensive line of communications solutions to suit your needs.

*"The radios performed so well, and they were so happy with it, in fact, a lot of the anglers fishing in the tournament said it was the best communications experience they've ever had at a tournament."* – Sam Crowther, Vice President, Atlantic Radio Telephone

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